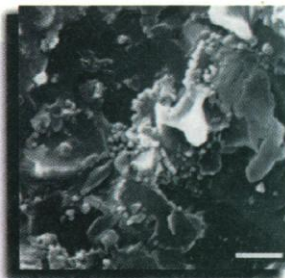


LETTERS

Foundations

A researcher recommends "equal intellectual contributions" in joint Chinese-Western research projects. Italian scientists write in favor of "bringing Italian science into Europe." A lack of appropriate funding is said to cause "much uncertainty" for Argentinian scientists. The possibility is raised that burning rain forests in Brazil can lead to respiratory and mosquito-borne disease. And are objects found in meteorites and in rocks on Earth smaller than "the lower limit for metabolically active life"? [Right, "bean-shaped nannobacteria" on a mineral; scale bar, 1 micrometer; from R. H. Sillitoe *et al.*, *Science* **272**, 1153 (1996)].



Successful Collaboration

As a frequent participant in collaborative research projects in China, I read "Geoscientists seek common ground on collaborations" (News & Comment, 2 May, p. 673) with great interest. In many international collaborative projects in China, it is not uncommon that the Chinese scientists end up supplying raw materials (samples and specimens) to their foreign collaborators, who analyze, interpret, and in many cases, write up the results for English publications. Such an imbalance of intellectual input in a joint project is hardly a good way for Chinese colleagues to earn respect.

Instead of asking for increased financial incentives and grumbling about lack of respect, our Chinese colleagues should call for equal opportunity and full participation throughout the entire course of the collaboration. After all, equal intellectual contribution to a joint research project is essential to earn mutual respect and is the very foundation for a successful international collaboration.

Hong Yang

Department of Human Genetics,
University of Michigan Medical School,
Ann Arbor, MI 48109, USA, and
Nanjing Institute of Geology and
Paleontology,
Chinese Academy of Sciences,
Nanjing, 210008, People's Republic of China
E-mail: hongyang@umich.edu

Italian Basic and Applied Research

We congratulate Lucio Bianco on his appointment as the new president of the Ital-

ian National Research Council (CNR) (S. Biggin, News & Comment, 28 Mar., p. 1871). This appointment was made by Luigi Berlinguer as part of a radical plan to shift CNR research from basic to applied. The possibility is also being discussed that research will be moved out of the CNR centers (mainly located within universities) to the CNR institutes, which are independent bodies.

This is not the first time that we have heard such discussions. More than 100 years ago, Louis Pasteur taught scientists that there is no clear distinction between basic, theoretical, and applied science. Rather, one can distinguish between good and bad science. Many examples can be provided of "basic" research that has become "applied" within a few years, particularly in the fields of biomedicine and biotechnology.

We would welcome a different move from Berlinguer: that of bringing Italian science into Europe, exactly as the prime minister and the finance minister of the same government are trying to bring Italy into accordance with the Maastricht economic standards.

■ It is time that good Italian science is distinguished from bad Italian science, just as it is in the rest of Europe.

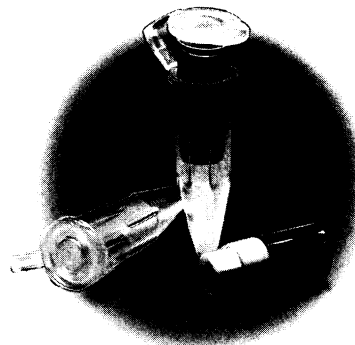
■ It is time that real peer review is established.

■ It is time that panels of expert international reviewers make site visits to our CNR centers and institutes. Our European colleagues are ready to collaborate with Italians in such a process.

■ It is time that human and financial resources are given only to groups with good records and good projects. Afterwards, a policy of allocation of money and resources can be made.

HIGH CAPACITY
HIGH RECOVERY

Clean Peptides Fast



Microcon®-SCX

adsorptive microconcentrator removes salts, detergents, or other low molecular weight contaminants from peptides, amino acids or DNA oligomers. This centrifugal filter device uses a strong cation exchange membrane to bind up to 250 µg of the sample. The whole procedure only takes a couple of minutes, typically with 90% recovery.

amicon
BIOSeparations

Proven in these applications:

- Sample preparation for HPLC, MS, amino acid sequencing, or amino acid analyses
- Removing amino acids and peptides before carbohydrate analysis
- Recovering salt- and detergent-free peptides from in-gel digestion
- Concentrating and desalting DNA oligomers

Call, fax, or e-mail for protocols.

U.S. and Canada,
call Technical Services:
1-800-MILLIPORE (645-5476).
To place an order, call
Fisher Scientific: 1-800-766-7000
(In Canada, call 1-800-234-7437).
In Japan, call (03) 5442-9716;
in Asia, call (852) 2803-9111;
in Europe, fax +33-3.88.38.91.95.

MILLIPORE

Circle No. 1 on Readers' Service Card

www.millipore.com/amicon
e-mail: protein@millipore.com